

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 03175 242105Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 L-03 H-01 PRS-01 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /056 W
-----250242 032651 /66

R 241744Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 959
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION OECD PARIS
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 3175

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UK, PFOR, EEC
SUBJECT: HEALEY ON EC DIRECT ELECTIONS

1. DURING LUNCHEON CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS
FEBRUARY 23, CHANCELLOR HEALEY MADE CLEAR HIS LACK OF
ENTHUSIASM FOR DIRECT ELECTIONS TO EC PARLIAMENT. HE
REGRETTED THAT ISSUE HAD BECOME A "VIRILITY SYMBOL" FOR
EUROPEANS, AND SCORNFULLY OBSERVED THAT IDEA HAD BEEN
ADOPTED IN THE FIRST PLACE BECAUSE IT WAS THE ONLY THING
THE NINE COULD AGREE ON AT THE TIME.

2. IT WAS EASIER FOR THE OTHERS, HEALEY SAID, BECAUSE
THEY DREW THEIR CANDIDATES FROM PARTY LISTS, BUT FOR
BRITAIN IT POSED THE DIFFICULT PROBLEM OF DRAWING
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ELECTORIAL BOUNDARIES. FURTHER, WITH BRITAIN'S FIRST-
PAST-THE-POST SYSTEM, SLIGHT TRENDS ONE WAY OR THE OTHER
COULD PRODUCE HIGHLY DISPROPORTIONATE RESULTS (CURRENT
PROJECTIONS INDICATE TORIES WOULD WIN A HEAVY MAJORITY
OF SEATS). (HE MIGHT HAVE ADDED THAT ADOPTION OF ANY
OTHER SYSTEM WOULD INVITE INVIDIOUS COMPARISON WITH THE
METHOD OF ELECTING MP'S TO WESTMINSTER.)

3. HEALEY DOUBTED LEGISLATION FOR EC DIRECT ELECTIONS
COULD BE ENACTED IN TIME TO MEET CURRENT DEADLINE, AND
EXPRESSED OPINION WITH OBVIOUS SATISFACTION THAT EC
PARLIAMENT WOULD NEVER BE GRANTED ANY REAL POWER ANYWAY.

4. HE EXPECTS THE SPECIAL CABINET SESSION ON THIS ISSUE
SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 25 TO BE LIVELY BECAUSE IT IS ONE
SUBJECT ON WHICH EVERY MEMBER HAS A VIEW. ARMSTRONG

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 24-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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